(c) whether it is also a fact that under the said scheme Centre provides full Central assistance to the States for constructing and upgrading rural roads; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) and (b) A meeting to review the implementation of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the States was held under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Rural Development on 3rd December, 2005. In this meeting, representatives of all the State Governments, except Goa, participated.

(c) and (d) The programme aims at providing connectivity by way of an all weather road to the eligible unconnected habitations in the rural areas. Under Bharat Nirman goal has been set to provide connectivity to all the habitations with a population of more than 1000 in the plain areas and habitations with the population of 500 or more in hilly and tribal areas by 2009-2010. The programme also provides for upgradation of existing rural roads subject to the prescribed conditions. The details of the programme (upto September, 2005) are given below:—

Total number of eligible habitations	1.72 lakh
Total length for upgradation	3,68,000 kilometres
Total estimated amount required	Rs. 1,32,000 crore
Value of proposals clear	Rs. 24850.76 crore
Amount released	Rs. 14253.54 crore
No. of road works approved	45643
Length of road works approved	144446.61 kilometres
Expenditure incurred	Rs. 11151.84 crore
Number of road works completed	28199
Length of road works completed	77718.31 kilometres.

Steps to boost textile sector

1634. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:
SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that to boost the textile sector, Government is proposing measures including reduction in import duty on man-made fibre/ yarn etc.;

(b) how the Ministry is planning its approach to compete in the international market and put its stronghold before restrictions on China are removed two years from now;

(c) whether it is also a fact that performance of the textile industry after dismantling of the quota system is not good and has reported a negative growth of 22.5 per cent during January-March,2005 when compared to the corresponding period in previous year, and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA) : (a) The Government has recently rationalized the fiscal duty structure, on man-made fibre/yarn to achieve growth and maximum value addition within the country. Except for mandatory excise duty on man-made filament yarns and man-made staple fibres, the whole value addition chain has been given an option of excise exemption. Further, the CENVAT on Polyester Filament Yarn has been reduced from 24% to 16%. The rationalization in fiscal levies is expected to attract more investments and facilitate increased investments in textile sector.

(b) The Government has been taking a number of steps from time to time to promote textile exports. Some of the important initiatives taken are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) and (d) As per the provisional data released by DGCI&S, the export of Indian textile and clothing registered a negative growth of 22.5% during the period Jan.-March,2005. However, as per the import data released by the USA and the European Union, exports of Indian textile items have witnessed a growth of 27.00% and 10.8% respectively. Even DGCI&S data for the period April-August, 2005 has shown a growth rate of 5.2% over the corresponding period of previous year. These markets account for 60% of Indian Textile Exports. The performance of India textile exporters compared to China is not that satisfactory due to the cost disadvantages on account of various market driven factors.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government for the Promotion of Export of Textiles

1. 100% Foreign Direct Investment is allowed in the textile sector under the automatic route.

2. The Government has de-reserved the readymade garments, hosiery and knitwear from the SSI sector.

3. The Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) has been made operational from 1-4-1999 to facilitate the modernisation and upgradation of the sector.

4. Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) has been launched to improve the productivity and quality of cotton.

5. A Scheme for Integrated Textile Parks has been launched by merging existing two schemes *i.e.* Textile Centres Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDS) and Apparel Parks for Exports Scheme (APES) to provide the industry with world class infrastructure facilities for setting up their textile units.

6. Apparel Park for Exports Scheme (APES)' has been launched with the objective of imparting a focused thrust for setting up apparel units of international standards at potential growth centres, and to give a fillip to exports. Under APES, 12 projects have been sanctioned with an estimated support from Government of India of Rs. 191.70 crores.

7. For upgrading infrastructure facilities at important textile centres, 18 projects worth Rs.270.80 crores have been sanctioned under the'Textile Centre Infrastructure Development Scheme (TCIDS)'.

8. The import of specified textiles and garment machinery items has been allowed at a concessional rate of customs duty to encourage investments and to make our textile products competitive in the global market. The cost of machinery has also been reduced through fiscal policy measures.

9. For the speedy modernisation of the textile processing sector, a credit linked capital subsidy scheme @10% has been introduced w.e.f. 20.4.2005 under TUFS, in addition to the existing 5% interest reimbursement.

10. National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT) and the Apparel Traning & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/ programmes to meet the skilled manpower requirements of the textile industry.

11. Facilities like eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get garments/textiles pre-tested so that they conform to the requirements of the importing countries.

Textile exports

1635. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that after lifting the ban on quota system by W.T.O., there are signs of continuous increase in export of textiles from India;

(b) if so, the percentage of increase in export in comparison to the previous year; and

(c) the names of the countries to which export has increased and the details regarding the types of textiles in whose respect increase in export was registered?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As per Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence & Statistics (DGCI&S), Kolkata, India's export of textile items during April-August, 2005 has increased to Rs.25655.61 crore from Rs.24385.41 crore during the corresponding period of previous year showing an increase of 5.2%. The textile items which have shown growth during this period are— readymade garments, cotton textiles, wool and woollen textiles, silk, handicrafts, coir and coir manufactures and jute. The names of top ten countries by export where India's textile exports during April-July,2005 as per DGCI&S have shown an increase over the corresponding period of previous year are— USA, EU, Bangladesh, Japan, China, Korea Republic, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Australia and Syria.